



RECYCLING & THE HOLIDAYS

Deck the Halls with Less Waste

Do you feel stressed by all of the buying and spending during the holidays? Do you want to give meaningful gifts that will be appreciated and not just add to an overload of "stuff?" The holidays are prime time for consumption -- Americans throw away 25 percent more trash during the Thanksgiving to New Year's holiday period than any other time of year. One program to help you consume less is Waste Free Holidays (www.wastefreeholidays.com), sponsored by King County. This program rewards shoppers who give an experience instead of "stuff." From Nov. 17 to Dec. 31, 2005, participating businesses and organizations offer discounts of 15 to 50 percent on "experience" gifts: tickets, gift certificates or memberships. These can be for arts performances, sports

events, restaurant meals, massages, and many other events and activities. For other ideas on reducing waste during the holiday season, visit these websites: Center for a New American Dream: www.newdream.org/holiday/index.php Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance: www.moea.state.mn.us/reduce/nowaste.cfm

Caution: don't burn wrapping paper!

Colorful wrapping paper makes holiday packages look festive, but after you have opened all the gifts don't burn that pile of paper! All paper creates toxins when burned, but the colored or glossy papers used to wrap presents have even more poison in the smoke. The inks and coatings are commonly made of plastics, toxic metals such as copper, lead and chrome, and other hazardous materials. When burned, these materials become tiny particles that lodge deep in the lungs. Poisons in the paper can damage nervous systems, kidneys and other organs.

Wrapping paper should be recycled rather than burned. All wrapping paper can be recycled except the shiny, metallic kind. If you have more paper than your cart can hold, place it in paper bags and set it next to the bin for collection. Please do not use plastic bags or cardboard boxes for this purpose. If you have room, store some of your extra paper for a couple of weeks. It helps ease the burdened collection system if extras are spread out over several weeks after the holidays.

Recycle Your Christmas Tree

Curbside collection

Yard waste customers can recycle Christmas trees at curbside. Trees are collected **ONLY** as yard debris -- they should not be placed in your garbage can. Flocked trees are the exception, as they cannot be composted. Flocked trees must be placed in the garbage. Make sure to remove all lights, tinsel and ornaments! Trees must be cut into 3-foot lengths and trunks can be no larger than 4 inches in diameter. Place the cut-up sections in your yard debris cart. Or, collect the cut-up sections into bundles and tie securely, then place them next to your cart for collection. Christmas trees count as part of your yard debris. That means if you put your tree out for collection in addition to a full cart of yard debris, you will be charged \$2.66 for each extra bag or bundle of branches.

Drop-off locations

Please call for fees and hours of operation

Pacific Topsoils

20871 NE Redmond Fall City Rd.
800-884-7645

All Wood Recycling

8504 192nd Ave. NE
206-682-5735

King County Transfer Stations

206-296-6542

Scout Collection

Boy Scout Troops from the Sammamish Trails District will pick up and recycle trees to raise funds for scouting activities. Check their website, http://members.doubleknot.com/Sammamish_Trails_District/, for collection dates and locations.

Overstuffed?

If holiday gatherings have left you with more garbage than will fit into your regular container with the lid closed, here's what to do. Just set it out in a bag or can next to your regular garbage. Waste Management will charge you \$4.47 for each additional can or bag.

Recycle Holiday Scraps

If holiday entertaining leaves your garbage can bursting with food scraps, paper plates and napkins, remember that you can lighten the load by recycling food waste and food-soiled paper in your yard waste cart.

Redmond's curbside program accepts all types of food and table scraps, including meat and poultry, bones, cheese, fruits and vegetables, eggshells, and coffee grounds and filters.

If you are concerned about odors in your bin while scraps sit there waiting to be collected, here are several ideas that may help:

- Layering food waste with yard waste, newspaper or shredded paper helps control odors and pests.
- If you have smelly items like raw chicken or crab shells, wrap them in a

newspaper or a paper bag and place them in your freezer until collection day, then drop the entire bundle into your cart.

- If you purchase milk or juice in half-gallon paper cartons, you can use the empty cartons to collect food scraps and then place the entire carton into your yard waste cart – the carton can also be composted
- If you do not have any yard waste, place your food scraps into a brown paper grocery bag and place the entire bag into the cart for collection. The bag will help to keep your cart clean and the paper will compost along with the food.

We welcome your comments and questions via email at kgustafson@redmond.gov, or you can call us at 425-556-2832.

WATER NEWS

Water in an Emergency

In an emergency, you could be stranded from your stored emergency supplies or Redmond's water supply may be contaminated or unavailable.

For alternatives, listen to local news outlets for advice about drinking water supplies and/or "boil water" notices before using water from the City's mains. If you cannot access local news, identify the nearest short-term supply of water inside your home,

condo or small business. Four emergency water sources are:

- Water can be drained from the pipes inside your home. Open a faucet on the top floor of your home. Next go to the faucet at the lowest point in your home. Open the faucet and drain out the water you need into a clean storage container.
- Water that has been placed in ice cube trays in the freezer can be used.
- Water from your toilet storage, or reserve tank, can be used if no chemicals have been used in the tank. Do not use this water if it is blue in color because chemicals have been added.
- And as a last resort for drinking water, water can be drained from the drain spout of a water heater. Be sure the electricity and/or gas are off before opening the drain. Drain the water into a clean storage container.

More information is available at: www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/disaster/hiddenwater.htm#hidden and www.redmond.gov/insidecityhall/fire/disasterprep/welcome.asp. Or call the City of Redmond Water Operations at 425-556-2846.

Water Conversation Survey Results

This summer, the City asked 90 randomly selected Redmond customers what conservation issues they care about most, what water-saving measures they have implemented in their homes and what actions they might be willing to take in the future. Redmond's responses were added to those of more than 500 other customer surveyed throughout the Cascade Water Alliance (CWA) service area.





Key survey findings

Most respondents (89 percent) knew our region had a drought alert this spring but were not concerned about being asked to voluntarily cut back water use. Overall, 94 percent thought they could reduce their water use by another 5 to 10 percent. When asked to rate the importance of various reasons to save water, saving on bills received the smallest percent of very important ratings (42 percent), and “ensuring enough water for the future” garnered the largest share (74 percent). About one in five respondents reported they have participated in water conservation programs provided through their local water utilities.

Indoor Water Use

Most (71 percent) households in CWA areas have at least one low-flow toilet. Only 18 percent of households reported checking toilets for silent leaks using dye tabs or food coloring, but if they did check, 38 percent found leaks. About 25 percent in houses built before 1994 do not have low-flow showerheads. More than 93 percent of our households have clothes washers – 40 percent of them are resource efficient washers.

Conservation programs for residential customers Rebates and discounts are available for:

Resource efficient clothes washers
Shut-off rain sensors for automatic in ground irrigation systems
Rain barrels
Rebate forms and information on qualifying clothes washers can be found at www.cascadewater.org

Garden information is available through:

Plant lists and brochures
Neighborhood Natural Yard Care classes
Call or email the Lawn and Garden Hotline at 206-633-0224 or info@lawnandgardenhotline.org

For these and all other conservation questions, please call Barbara Sullivan at 425-556-2845 or email bsullivan@redmond.gov.

Outdoor Water Use

Of households that water their lawns, the most common watering systems are moveable sprinklers (49 percent) and in-ground sprinklers with automatic controllers (32 percent). Twenty-eight percent thought educational materials were helpful and 26 percent thought on-site audits would be helpful, and in all areas both indoor and outdoor, customers favored rebates to jump-start water savings. Twelve percent of the gardeners used rain barrels to water plants. About 25 percent of the respondents use a landscape professional, not only for basic gardening services, but to seek advice on lawn care, water scheduling, soils and plant selections. These folks were more likely to add mulch and compost but less likely to aerate lawns or grass cycle. Twenty-four percent of the respondents report washing their cars at home. More than 55 percent report using a commercial car wash.

The results of the survey are especially important this year. The CWA is less than two years old and its partner agencies, the cities of Redmond, Bellevue, Kirkland, Issaquah, Tukwila, the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, Skyway Water and Sewer District and Covington Water District, are working together to define their customers' needs. In total, these agencies provide water to more than 300,000 customers in 128,000 residential households.

A second reason for the survey comes from the passage of HB 1338, the Municipal Water Supply Efficiency Requirements Act, in 2003. It requires utilities with more than 15 connections to provide appropriate water conservation programs. During the past two

years, a cross-section of stake holders met with the Washington State Department of Health to define water conservation program requirements. CWA members are meeting now to begin the process of incorporating the results of the survey and the results of a Conservation Potential Assessment to provide cost effective and measurable outreach programs.

The survey was conducted by Linda Dethman and Associates for the CWA.

Prevent Frozen Pipes During Winter Freezes

Every winter, many homeowners face the expense and inconvenience of frozen pipes. Prepare now so that you can cross that worry off your list by taking a few simple precautions.

Find and mark the master water shutoff valve and make sure everyone in your home knows where it is. It's often near the water heater or the washing machine – usually where the water line comes into your house from the street. If a pipe bursts or you find a leak anywhere in the house, this valve turns off the water. Disconnect and drain outdoor

hoses. Detaching the hose allows water to drain from the pipe. Insulate pipes or faucets in unheated areas. Wrap water pipes before temperatures plummet. Hardware or building supply stores have a variety of pipe wrap materials. Seal off access doors, air vents and cracks, but not the vents your furnace or hot water heater need for good combustion.

For information on how to locate your water meter and checking for leaks, please call the helpful crew of the Redmond Water Utility at 425-556-2846.

Keep Storm Drains Clear

Our rainy season starts about the same time leaves are falling on our lawns, parking lots and streets. Help to avoid flooded streets and damage to streams by properly disposing of fallen leaves. Storm drains clogged with leaves cannot carry off rainwater. During heavy rains, plugged-up drains can cause streets and roadways to flood. If you notice leaves accumulating, please sweep them clear of the storm drain or place them in your cart as part of your yard waste collection service.

Report clogged and flooded storm drains in streets by calling 556-2800. For information about disposal options for large quantities of yard debris, call Redmond's Recycling Program at 425-556-2832.

Don't choke our fish!

All storm drains in Redmond empty directly into streams, rivers, or Lake Sammamish. Leaves and branches that wash down storm drains can dam small streams and clog fish spawning beds. Decomposing leaves also reduce the amount of oxygen available to fish and other aquatic organisms. So, never sweep piles of leaves into storm drains or onto drainage grates. Leaves and branches should always be placed in yard debris containers for collection, or in a composting bin.

Safe Winter Roads

What does Redmond use for ice-control on winter roads? On our rare snowy and icy days, the Street Maintenance Division spreads calcium chloride (not sodium chloride, which is table salt) on the streets because it is non-corrosive to vehicles.

PROTECTING OUR WATER

Protecting Underground Water

The City will continue to work with local businesses through increased technical assistance visits in 2006, with an eye toward ensuring Redmond's drinking water wells stay free of contamination.

Why all the fuss about groundwater?

The City wants to get the word out to our residents and businesses that groundwater protection is important to all of us because we drink groundwater. In many areas of the City, the groundwater





aquifer begins only 5 to 15 feet below the surface. Since the groundwater is shallow and the soil in our valley is porous (allowing contaminants to migrate down rapidly), protection of our susceptible drinking water supply wells has been mandated by the City Council through the adoption of the Wellhead Protection Ordinance in 2003.

What is the City doing to protect groundwater?

The Ordinance requires increased care in the management of hazardous materials in the areas closest to the City's water supply wells. These areas are designated as Wellhead Protection Zones (see figure), and the ordinance provides several levels of protection for the drinking water supply within these zones. The City identifying and installing early warning wells to monitor for contaminants and identify them before they can harm the drinking water system. Over the last two years we have coordinated with businesses and facilities to collect information regarding their use of hazardous materials. The City is using this information to focus

our efforts and outreach in the areas that pose the greatest risk to the aquifer.

Wellhead Protection Program Staff will work with King County Local Hazardous Waste Management technical assistance teams to visit businesses and facilities in order to help them work toward safer use, storage and disposal of hazardous materials within the Wellhead Protection Zones. The teams will focus on providing advice and recommendations that will aid businesses in making sound decisions regarding pollution prevention, waste reduction, chemical storage, secondary containment and regulatory compliance. These voluntary visits may help businesses identify potential pollution risks; ways to reduce waste disposal costs, enhanced efficiency in processes, identify environmentally sound best management practices and ways to reduce liabilities (fiscal and environmental). Best of all, not only is this free to them, but the Voucher Incentive Program can reimburse qualified businesses 50%, up to \$500, of costs for properly completing recommended

waste management, disposal or pollution prevention work.

How else might the Ordinance affect you?

The Ordinance also includes other protections including prohibition of certain types of high-risk facilities and activities from locating in the Zones closest to the wells. New development and construction must meet stricter standards to avoid damaging the underground aquifer. Facilities located closest to the wells will need to have all new and existing stormwater infiltration systems (dry wells, French drains, etc.) certified by a registered engineer by October of 2008. Businesses and facilities will also need to begin inspections of elevator and hydraulic lift cylinders for leakage and report the results to the City. If a facility experiences the unfortunate event of a spill or release of hazardous material they are required to promptly clean it up and call the State and Federal spill hotlines as well as the City at 425-556-2868 to report their release.

Wellhead Protection staff will be working with businesses to provide information and technical assistance to remind them of these and other requirements. If you have questions or would like to schedule a consultation, please contact Wellhead Protection staff at 425-556-2756, at groundwater@redmond.gov or at www.redmond.gov/insidecityhall/publicworks/environment/groundwaterordinance.asp